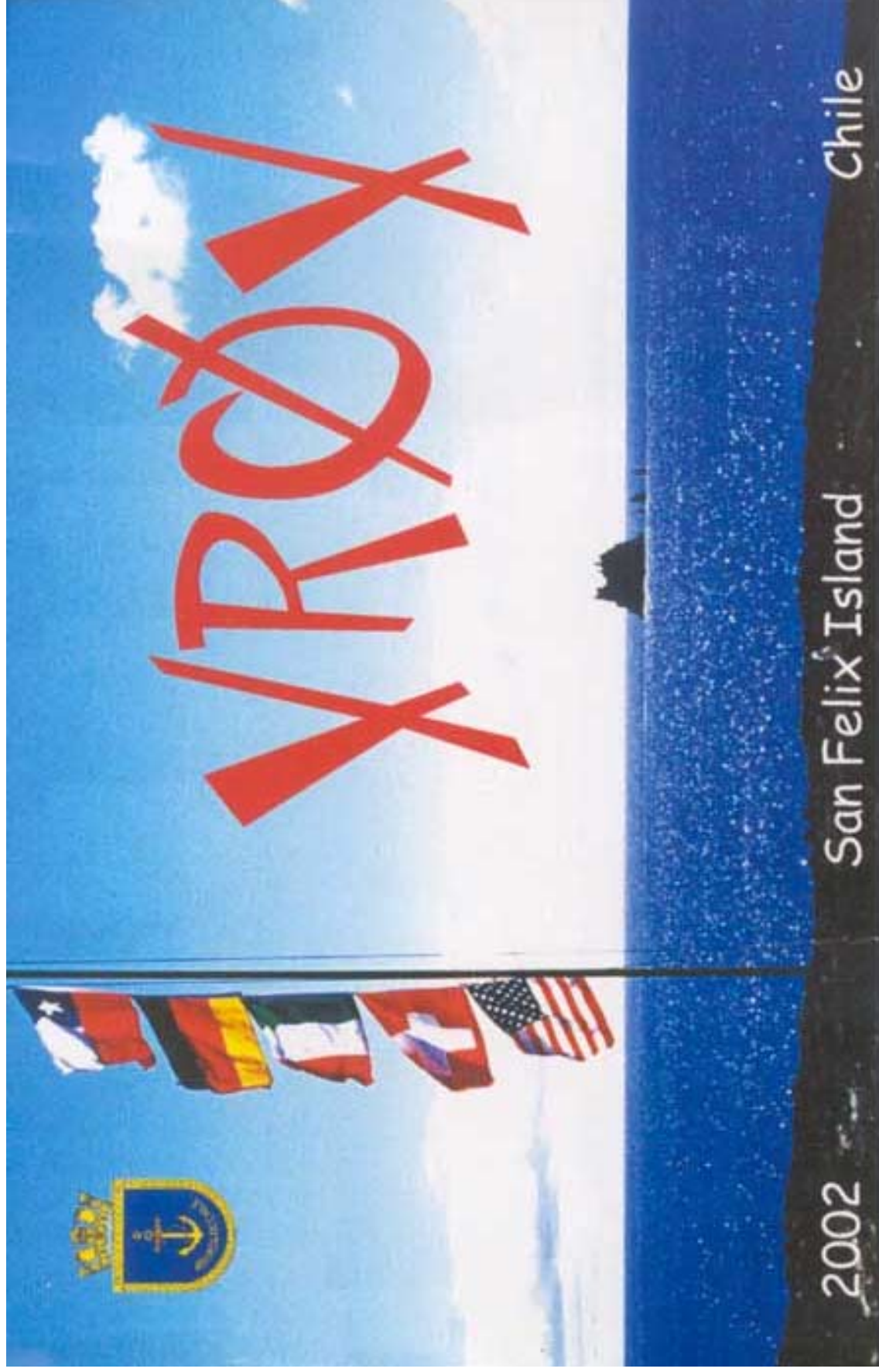




southern california dx club

JULY 2002



Skip's Soap Box— Words from our President

de Skip, KJ6Y



The summer DX season is upon us, and things seemed to have slowed down a bit from the hectic pace since the beginning of the year. After starting the year with several well-needed DXpeditions,

there hasn't been a whole lot of activity. Hopefully things will pick up again in the fall. Although I did work 3XA8DX for an all time new one.

Field Day was a lot of fun this year. The Sherman Oaks Amateur Radio Club (KD9V) set up antennas in my yard and operated with batteries and solar panels. We had an A3S with 40-meter add-on, a 3-el 10-meter beam, R-7 vertical and an 80-meter vertical. Operators were N6GIL, W6VX, W6VXN, W8DX, K6YRA, W6BUN, K6ADY, N6AV, W6EGZ, WB6DBK, WA6UYO,

and myself. We had a good time and the food was spectacular. Hope your field day was as successful.

A special thanks the Neil, K6SMF for being the auctioneer at our Anchors Aweigh night. There weren't too many buyers but the club did make a few dollars. I feel sorry for Harvey, W8DX who had to take his printer back home. Thanks to all who made donations to the club.

Remember the ARRL Southwestern Division Convention comes August 16th, 17th and 18th in Escondido at the California Center for the Arts.

See you at the next meeting.



Auction

The annual SCDXC "Great Buy" auction was held at the last meeting. As threatened K6SMF was the man with the gavel. He made a lot of noise banging it on a variety of surfaces including a piece of worm-eaten wood.

Fantastic bargains and humor were the bywords of the day. Arleen bought more junk (for Neil?) and Dan wrote the biggest check. No SCDXC coffee cups, tank coils, or big air capacitors were offered. However, K6FG did bring a lot of transformers and chokes. It was unclear if these were bought by Wayne or if Mark paid to have them hauled away.

W8DX was the luckiest of the bidders. He "bought" his own **LARGE SIZE** printer for **ONE DOLLAR!**

We recommend that you save up your old throwaways for next year. Two of the REAL collectors who were absent this year have promised to be there!

Next General Meeting

The SCDXC meets the second Thursday of the month. Our next meeting will be held July 11, 2002 at Syd Kronenthal Park in Culver City. The park is located 4 blocks west of La Cienega Blvd. and 2 blocks south of Washington Blvd. From the 10 Freeway exit La Cienega south to Washington Blvd. Turn right (west) 4 blocks to McManus Ave (it's La Cienega Ave to the right, McManus to the left). Turn left (south) 2 blocks to the Park. The street dead-ends at the parking lot. Please do not park in the school lot.

The program for the August meeting will be a big surprise. The raffle *could* include just about anything.

See ya there!

The Veeeeeep Speaks

de Herb KG6OK



Herb was overheard talking after the board meeting. The gang had adjourned to a favorite food court in Calabasas.

Sayeth Herb,

"I looked at the log the other say and saw a blank. Over a week without an entry! I realized that it was more than semi-lousy band conditions—but I have not been able to pinpoint the cause.

He continued " Maybe I am suffering from the Summer Doldrums. Maybe I am too busy at work. It could be any number of things and I hope to change my ways

and get back to DAILY activity."

The Ol'Man had an answer for him—but Herb said his XYL did not want him to retire and just "hang out". He does a lousy job of washing dishes and running the carpet cleaner.

Anyone have a better solution to this serious problem?

E MAIL WARNING

A new "Critical Update" to Microsoft Office 2000 may result in you not being able to handle .jpg and .pdf attachments.

The intent was to block certain types of viruses and worms that can ride in on executable files. Good idea — but bad implementation.

There is no uninstall for the update — you are forced to reinstall MSIE and MS Office
Be very careful and trust no one.

Summer Bash— August 25th

Our annual get together with the San Diego DX Club will be held on Sunday August 25 from 1 P.M. till we go home. The location will be at W6IRD (Wayne's) place. We will have directions in next months SCDXC Newsletter.

San Felix — cover story

There were three members of the SCDXC on the DXpedition to San Felix Island in March 2002, using the callsign **XRØX**.

San Felix is in the Pacific northwest of Valparaiso. The pictures show it to be a barren rocky island — no place for a Club Med.

The major goal of this expedition was to make a lot of Qs and to document indigenous species, especially terrestrial plants and marine invertebrates.

The 12-member team included SCDXC members W6KK, N7CQQ and DJ9ZB. The following also were in the team: NP4IW, K5AB, I8NHJ, N6MZ, KO4RR, KK6EK, HB9AHL, K5AND, and N6TQS.

A great presentation on the trip was made at the DX Convention.

Field Day 2002

A few of the gang got together at the Prezzes place in Woodland Hills and did the Field Day Thing. Skip said this was a practice for their next DXpedition.

(ed note: He would not say were they might be going next - however, this group has done the IOTA trips to the channel Islands and Catalina. It is rumored they have a new island sighted — could it be "Duck Island in Reseda Park?)

WANTED!!!

URGENT!!!

The Newsletter needs your contributions.

Photos

Stories

News Worthy Events

QSLs we Remember

Propagation—January 2002

by Shel, W6EL

These predictions for the five prime HF bands show the times when propagation is expected to be best from Los Angeles to several locations that are expected to be active during the coming month. Other times are possible, but with weaker signals or lower probability. Openings are not expected on bands that are not listed. A solar flux of 167, corresponding to a sunspot number of 129, and an average geomagnetic field are assumed.



TF Iceland - 7/2 to 7/8 -
Beam 28 degrees
Sunrise/sunset (on 7/5)
0328/2321
20 0200-0800.

5W Western Samoa - 7/2
to 7/12 -
Beam 236 degrees
Sunrise/sunset (on 7/7)
1755/0509

80 0700-1230.
40 0530-1300.
20 0300-1630.
15 1730-1100.
10 2000-2400.

Sunrise/sunset times are at the DX location. All times are UTC.

Good luck and good DX from Shel, W6EL.

OJ0 Market Reef - 7/8 to 7/11 -
Beam 20 degrees
Sunrise/sunset (on 7/10) 0152/1945
20 0100-0730.

3DA Swaziland - 7/11 to 7/18 -
Beam 83 degrees
Sunrise/sunset (on 7/15)
0445/1515
40 0330-0430.
20 0100-0130 and 0500-0600.
Also, long path 1230-1530.
15 0630-0830.

FG Guadeloupe - 7/10 to 7/25 -
Beam 94 degrees
Sunrise/sunset (on 7/18)
0947/2237
80: 0500-0900.
40: 0300-0930.
20: 0030-1130.
15: 1100-0730.

The primary W6ELProp distribution site is:

<http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/>

Any new version of W6ELProp will first be available at this site.

Spotting Derby

de K6EXO



Summer DX usually consists of a lot of tuning and very few contacts. This year is no exception. As we wait for the Fall and the great long-path openings we listen to noise and try to copy weak signals. The good news is that we may soon have another band at around 5 MHz. Interesting.

Here is the list for this reporting period.

Spotter	Spots	Score
-----	-----	-----
W6VX	29	102
AD6KQ	25	78
W6LAX	26	71
K6YRA	16	67
WA6TLA	15	50
WB6RSE	11	50
W6TG	10	48
KC6X	9	32
KG6OK	7	32
K6YUI	8	30
WA5VGI	7	21
N6HC	15	19
K6IRA	10	16
K2PLF	5	11
W6KK	4	11
KJ6Y	3	11
W6ZH	5	8
N6RT	1	8
WO6M	1	8
KC6T	3	7

K6FG	1	7
W6NRQ	1	4
WA6WXD	1	4
AA6RK	2	2
W6SR	1	1
W6YOO	1	0



Ham Puzzle

By Milt, W6RJO



At one of the SCDXC meeting raffles three cloth covered boxes were still on the table after the su-

per-prizes were gone.

They were labeled respectively "Coax Relays, "Coax Adaptors", and "Coax Relays and Coax Adaptors" (the less expensive

items).

Somehow, during the pre-affle prize arrangements all three boxes were mislabeled. This was discovered too late to get fixed, since the meeting was running late. So the screw up was announced before the drawing.

When a raffle winner of these prizes , because of the goof, was allowed two shots per ticket, stuck his hand into any box/he was not sure whether he was getting a coax relay or a coax adaptor (no feeling around or peeking allowed).

How did one of our "slicker" winners figure out how to "beat the game"? That is, after his studied first pick, he knows exactly what is in all three

boxes.

Hint: That all box labels are marked wrong is a clue to the contents of all three boxes.

Here are the answers to the April 2002 Ham Puzzle

1. (b)
2. All False
3. (b)
4. {a-i), (b-g), (c-f), (d- j), (e-h)
5. (e)
6. (b)
7. (b)
8. (b)
9. (d)
10. All True
11. (a)
12. (b)

QSLs we remember

(ed note: The other day at breakfast Fred, W6TJO, was reminiscing about his start in Ham radio. It was so very typical of the way many of started. here is the story)

"It was 49 years ago when I drove from Rochester, N.Y., to the FCC office in Buffalo to take the Novice exam which, in those days, was given ONLY by an FCC Examiner. It consisted of 5 WPM and a written test. I remember on of the multiple choice questions asked the meaning of GMT. One of the choices was *General Motors Truck!* Three months later, in the fall of 1953, I passed the 13 WPM and written test, earned the General ticket, dropped the 'N' from my call and officially was known to the world as K2DMA.

Some may recall that Leo Meyerson's World Radio Labs sent out a supply of QSL 's to newly licensed hams. Sure, they were an ad for his business and we paid the postage to promote his business to hams we worked. But it was a case of *quid pro quo* since we now had our own QSL emblazoned with our call letters.

The first CW rig had a 1625 in the final. . .(that's a 12 volt filament version of the 807 for those who came later.) But with a new license it was time for another rig; the work-horse Viking II. Antenna? An end-fed Zepp, fed with 300 ohm ribbon. The location? Next to a hill. But it got out, as well an in, yes, into neighbors radios. In those days we hadn't heard of TVI, but RFI was the curse.

Then to be able to load up on 20. What a thrill. The first DX worked and confirmed was TI2AJ and here is the unimaginative QSL received. But like the ugly duckling that only a mother could love, I admit it does hold a sentimental value to me. "



Welcome to the shack of:



&



Rich, W6VX, is one of the most active members of the SCDXC. He showed off his super neat shack with an apology and a request to forgive the sloppy shack. That confused us — we could not find a pencil out of place or a spot of dust!.

He was a happy camper the day these photos were taken. He is shown here pointing to QTH of the station he had just worked for number 99 on 160.

You are invited to send photos and stories about YOUR Shack to share with the gang. It is amazing how varied the rigs are we use!



Retirement DXing: The WA5VGI Experience



Part 1: Winds and Verticals

How many of us DXers either currently working or just retired remember those times we wished we didn't have to turn off the rig or could be home during the week when a rare DX station was scheduled to be on. It is definitely a challenge to be a top DXer and hold down a regular job and raise a family. Thus I looked forward with relish to the day when I would be retired and have unlimited opportuni-

ties to chase DX. That day came in March of 1996 when tired of too much travel, endless meetings and briefing charts I gave my notice to retire from Rockwell International after 33 years and move to greener pastures. The plan was simple. We would sell our home in Thousand Oaks and move up to the central coast north of San Luis Obispo and purchase a home on acreage. I would put up a couple of towers, add some good antennas and voila I would be a top gun DXer. Alas the plans of man do not always travel a straight road. What follows is a look at 6 years of experimenting, frustration and challenge leading to eventual fulfillment of my original dream station.

Selling a house in an up market and buying a home in a down market has definite advantages. We were able to sell our home in one week and purchase our retirement home in the same period. Thirty days later we were moving into our new home on the outskirts of west Atascadero. Our new home had been a slight DX compromise in that while located on the edge of a 1650 foot ridge a local water tank and a small adjacent hill caused partial blockage on the short path to Europe. But with vista views, great neighbors and 21 acres it seemed a good choice as a place to start our retirement living. The house had not been lived in for almost 2 years and the adjacent property required extensive cleanup (weed abatement, tree trimming) and some

landscaping. So I moved all of my ham gear into the room that would be my ham shack and made the decision to take 6 months to get our house and property into good shape before setting up my station.

Six months passed quickly and one morning in early October I found myself unpacking the boxes containing the transceivers, amplifiers and assorted station equipment that would become the WA5VGI station. Having had no time to explore getting permits and purchasing a tower(s) I decided that I would utilize vertical antennas and let the towers/beams wait until the following spring. I ordered a Cushcraft R-7000 for 40 through 10 meters and a GAP DX-IV for 80 and 160 meters. With the help of John, W6KFV who lived in neighboring Nipomo we assembled and erected both verticals on the ridgeline of the property. To get some height on the R-7000 I fabricated a 20 foot mast from 4X4s and attached a 20 foot aluminum mast to it. Mounting the R-7000 at the top of the aluminum mast this assembly was raised and guyed against an adjacent oak tree limb using a block and tackle provided by John. After

(Continued on page 8)



WA5VGI Station 1996



GAP DX IV after storm 1997

(Continued from page 7)

raising and lowering the antenna several times we finally achieved acceptable SWR readings on all bands 40-10 meters. The next couple of months were pure joy and I enjoyed daily and nightly DXing on all 9 bands. It was a thrill to work my first DX on 160 meters and also enjoy the WARC bands as well. All was wonderful until the first winter rains.

It has just been a light rain that night in early December but as I fired up on 20 meters the next morning the SWR suddenly went haywire on the R-7000 vertical. After a frequency assessment it became obvious that the 17 meter trap had somehow failed. A call to Cushcraft provided no real insight into the problem except that they would send a replacement trap ASAP. Again with W6KFV's help we lowered the vertical and replaced the trap. Again all was well. Until the next rain. Again the same SWR problem with the culprit being the 17 meter trap. The vertical was lowered and upon examining the trap both the internal coil and Teflon insulator had melted. As a matter of information I had only been using an Ameritron AL-811H amplifier (about 600 watts out) since I didn't have 220 volts service to the shack at that time. Another call to Cushcraft and they provided another replacement trap. I now had serious doubts about this vertical being compatible with rain. Fortunately there was no more rain for the next few weeks. But then the big blow!

We could see the storm coming out of the southwest before going to bed that evening but had no idea what was in store for us. Soon after going to bed the wind began to scream and howl. The velocity increased to the point that it was rattling the stone roof tiles and buffeting the house. I got up and looked outside but it

was pure black with sheets of rain coming down. The wind was unrelenting and finally around 4:00 AM I decided to see if the antennas were surviving these terrible winds. I tried opening the front door but it was raining so hard I decided going outside made no sense. Instead I went down to the ham shack and turned on the TS-940S. The SWR problem on the R-7000 was present again and when I switched to the GAP vertical the SWR was at infinity. Big problems!!

At first light the winds had subsided and I ventured outside. The R-7000 was bent at a 45 degree angle approximately at its midpoint and the GAP DX-IV vertical had folded up like a pretzel. The GAP had been guyed at two levels per manufacturer's instructions and all guy lines were still attached. Damage to the GAP was extensive with the coax which is routed internally torn in half, much of the linear loading tubing destroyed along the two bottom sections and the capacity hat. My neighbor up the road had recorded the wind velocity at 94 mph.

It took 3 weeks to get replacement parts for the GAP and another trap for the R-7000. The scheme for guying the GAP was revised to have it guyed at 3 levels with 4 guys at each level. Things returned to normal until the next big wind/rain storm a month later. The GAP was again demolished and the R-7000 bent at its midpoint along with another trap failure. After more analysis and a letter to Cushcraft requesting my money back the R-7000 was replaced with an older model R-7 and the guying on the GAP changed to 4 levels and 4 guys at each level. That combination survived through the remainder of the winter and spring winds and rains. As summer loomed on the horizon it was time to start thinking about a tower.

(to be continued).

FCC Required Calculations

Remember Amateur Radio operators licensed by the FCC are required to do a "routine evaluation" of the strength of the RF fields around their stations, subject to certain exemptions. These rules can be found in the FCC's ET Docket No. 93-62. More information can be found at the ARRLWeb's RF Safety page.

This evaluation requires you to calculate the intensity of RF fields around your antenna. These calculations are to be kept at your station and NOT mailed to the FCC.

The process to comply with these regulations is very simple.

Go to the following Internet address and fill in the forms you will find there.

<http://n5xu.ae.utexas.edu/rfsafety/>

Interesting Links

The following is a short list of internet addresses that may be of interest to Hams.

To buy or sell:

<http://www.k1dwu.net/hamtrader/>

<http://dealamerica.com/deal/cgi-bin/ads/bcads.cgi>

<http://antiqueradio.org/index.html>

History from the viewpoint of the DXer

<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/1641/>

Any additions? Let us know.

Who We Are

The SCDXC Newsletter is published monthly by the Southern California DX Club and is mailed to all club members.

Please notify the editor if you do not receive your newsletter, have a change of address, or have found an error.

Please direct all submissions to the editor.

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Commercial ads (limited to Ham Radio) are also accepted. Send Email for fees.

FOR SALE:

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